From the Editor:

Crime and Punishment: Current State of Research. Project Conclusion Approaching

Esteemed Colleagues, Dear Readers,

In this issue we fondly remember our recently departed colleagues who dedicated themselves to the study of Dostoevsky: Nina Fedotovna Budanova, whose works for the catalog of Fyodor Dostoevsky's library and the chronicle of his life have enduring value, no matter how much they are corrected or supplemented, and Valentina Alexandrovna Tvardovskaya, who perceived and described Dostoevsky's life and thought in the context of the history of Russian social thought. I remember, back in the early 1990s, I visited Valentina Alexandrovna (at my request and her invitation) to discuss a research project dedicated to Dostoevsky's *pochvennichestvo*. At that time, I was greatly troubled by the fact that Dostoevsky's thought was leveled by researchers, integrated into a series led by Apollon Grigoryev, while Dostoevsky provided not an emotional (as characteristic of Grigoryev), but a logically balanced, working description of why it is so important to turn to the "pochva". His description is as relevant now as ever. Dostoevsky insists that those who make a stand on mechanical borrowings from Western institutions are terribly and fatally mistaken for one simple reason: they seek to borrow not ideas, but the forms in which these ideas have been shaped by specific conditions, under the pressure of specific circumstances, and in interaction with a certain type of national cultural context. He compellingly demonstrates that such borrowings are impossible and harmful, and if borrowing is to take place, then it must borrow the idea and allow it to develop freely in the forms inherent to the culture that adopts it: just as it is impossible to transplant a mature tree from one climate to another, but it is possible to plant a seed, and the plant will grow, significantly different from those that develop from such seeds in a different climate. The plant that will grow will be quite suitable for the soil that nurtured it, organic to it. Vasily Rozanov, in his essay "On Dostoevsky," as if complementing what has been said, looking at it from another angle, formulates Dostoevsky's views as follows: "The worldview of the people is

a common soil, on which only any individual development can rightly grow; Russia, historically arisen is the foundation and a series of links, on which, laying further links, we can work correctly" [Rozanov, 1990, pp. 69–70]. Valentina Alexandrovna and I spent about three hours discussing Dostoevsky's *pochvennichestvo*, and we agreed that all descriptions of it, representing a certain configuration of "followers," only make sense as something coherent and viable for life when they refer to Dostoevsky's thought.

The project did not come to fruition back then for various reasons, but the three hours given to me by Valentina Alexandrovna, I believe, have influenced many of my works dedicated to the life and thought of Dostoevsky.

We publish two texts about the departed, allowing their voices to be heard by scholars and researchers and forming a comprehensive understanding of their contribution to Dostoevsky studies, prepared by Nikolay Podosokorsky.

The first issue of 2024, for the most part, is devoted to the theme "*Crime and Punishment*: Current State of Research." Our academic Research center "Dostoevsky and World Culture" has been actively engaged in this topic for the third year now — and research is only gaining momentum — yet by the end of the year, we will need to compile the fourth book of the series *Dostoevsky's Novels: Current State of Research* and draw some conclusions about the study of both *Crime and Punishment* and the basic principles of study and teaching it. In this regard, I remind all interested colleagues about the deadline for submitting articles for the project — June 20, 2024.

From February 28 to March 1, 2024, the third International Academic online Conference "*Crime and Punishment*: Current State of Research" was held. The conference was attended by 58 researchers from Russia, Azerbaijan, Italy, China, Serbia, the USA, Turkey, Croatia, and the Czech Republic. On the last day of the conference, a well-prepared round table "Teaching *Crime and Punishment* in school and university" took place. It can be said that the entire conference, with its exceptionally diverse topics, led to the round table, which was dedicated to perspectives of perception, analysis practices, and approaches to teaching the novel. I believe that such a practical goals and perspectives are the best things that can happen to any theory.

I cannot fail to mention here the welcoming words of the Deputy Director of the Institute of Russian Literature of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Yulia V. Shevchuk, which became a true and beautiful epigraph to the conference, paraphrasing it as I understood and remembered it. Quoting Annensky's words about how in *Crime and Punishment*, more than in any other novel, ***the power and freedom of bright thought*** captivate the most, she said: Dostoevsky is a person of bright thought, but also of bright conscience

— and such a state is not our usual state, it is not given by psycho-physiological factors. Such a state can only be gifted to us. And communication with Dostoevsky is an opportunity for us to enter a state of honest and bright thought and conscience.

Here you can find the program of the Conference (in Russian): https://imli.ru/139-konferentsii/seminary-i-konferentsii-2024-goda/5828-iii-mezhdunarodnaya-nauchnaya-onlajn-konferentsiya-prestuplenie-i-nakazanie-sovremennoe-sostoyanie-izucheniya

First day: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0jSkDpKXmEk&t=13s

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyd1Aq46XVA

Second day: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xaiRmjkMEFg

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7wHRUjR1O4&t=1s

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EoK5c8nbV2w

Third day (including Round table): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wDoCHXyja_k

The two articles of this issue, published in the section *Hermeneutics. Slow Reading*, mine and Tatiana Magaril-Il'iaeva's, are based on the presentations given at the conference.

My article is devoted to the alchemical subtext in Dostoevsky, which permeates through ordinary and even deliberately low words, and to the pattern formed by the alternation of synonyms (in this case: "zhirnyi" and "polnyi"), which Dostoevsky uses as one of the ways to adjust the reader's gaze, to format their paradigm of perception. The combination of these text-building methods creates the extraordinarily strange figure of Porfiry Petrovich in descriptions and characteristics, whose very name means "red stone" (the name of the final stage of obtaining the "philosopher's stone," which turns metals into gold, in alchemical treatises identified with Christ) and who does everything imaginable and unimaginable so that the hero could "become the sun" (I remind readers that the same symbol ʘ was used to denote both the sun and gold).

Tatiana Magaril-Il'iaeva's article is dedicated to the hero's path to transformation in Dostoevsky's work. This path, the beginning of which Dostoevsky repeatedly describes in early texts, is brought to its conclusion for the first time in *Crime and Punishment* — if we set aside the stories of children, who were also given the opportunity to reach their other nature in early works.

I would like to remember that our next conference will be dedicated to *The Idiot* and will take place on April 18–20, 2024 in Staraya Russa as part of the annual Readings "Dostoevsky's Works in the Perception of

21st-Century Readers." The deadline for the call for paper is March 25. Details can be found here: https://imli.ru/139-konferentsii/seminary-i-konferentsii-2024-goda/5882-khkhvi-mezhdunarodnye-chteniya-proizvedeniya-f-m-dostoevskogo-v-vospriyatii-chitatelej-khkhi-veka

Our third Annual conference, "The Book in the Book," which first took place in 2023, is scheduled for October 1–3, 2024. This conference is dedicated to the theoretical problem of the presence of books ***as directly mentioned texts and material objects participating in the plot***, in the works of world literature and culture. We ask those willing to participate in the conference to pay attention to the words highlighted in bold italics.

I would like to emphasize that for all our conferences — especially for the annual Readings "Dostoevsky's Works in the Perception of 21st-Century Readers," as it is an educational conference — you can apply to participate as a listener and participant to the discussion (with information about yourself): we do include such participants in the program and greatly appreciate their participation in the overall research work of the conference.

The years 2021–2024 are marked by the release of a large number of publications dedicated to Dostoevsky and his works. We will be happy to provide our pages for the publication of comprehensive and substantive reviews of books and collections released in 2021–2024. We are also always open to publishing substantive overviews of past conferences.

In the section *Poetics. Context*, an article by Elena Kudryavtseva is published, dedicated to the manipulative strategies of the Underground man, the "reading man," who carefully read, among other things, Karamzin, and assimilated the idyllic way of expression as a method of extracting a woman from the protective shell she had built. The problem is that such extraction, as the Underground Man suddenly discovers, implies a significant crossing of the extractor's own boundaries; proposing an idyllic development of the story involves not only the listener but also the narrator of the new story against his will and intentions: he is forced to cross the boundary separating manipulation from involvement, as he has to intensify the idyll, overcoming the resistance of the heroine that evokes anger in him. This involuntary surrender of his own boundaries engenders increased anxiety in him and a desire to protect himself from the captivating, against his will, idyllic element, by creating an anti-idyllic perspective. It turns out that wearing the idyllic mask for someone else does not go unnoticed for the one who wears it: the mask involves him in a continuing, self-consistent plot, instead of giving him the opportunity (by removing it) to forever close the door to the event for which it was worn. The hero's manipulative strategies are also based on references to sacred texts,

including quotations from them in his speech as carriers of idyllic constructions. It should be noted, however, that the inclusion of gospel quotes in the idyllic discourse signifies a sharp change in their meaning, as it shifts them from the register of selfless love to a much lower register of interested and selfish love: “Here, work is joyful, sometimes you even deny yourself bread for the sake of children, and it’s still joyful. Because they will love you for it later; you save for yourself. Children grow up — you feel that you are their example, their support; that even if you die, they will carry your feelings and thoughts throughout their lives, as they received them from you, they will take on your image and likeness” [Dostoevsky, 1972–1990, vol. 5, p. 158]; “Love! — but this is all, this is all, this is a diamond, a maiden’s treasure, love is! After all, to deserve this love, one is ready to lay down one’s soul, to go to death. And what is your love valued for now?” [Dostoevsky, 1972–1990, vol. 5, p. 159]. While these meanings can work just as the Underground Man intended for involving Liza, creating an idyllic illusion of endless heights of conjugal sexual love, the reader, according to Dostoevsky’s idea, should notice a radical lowering of the very idea of love in these images.

I want to highlight the problematic narrative strategy of the researcher herself (although such a strategy is persistently introduced into the consciousness of young researchers by a certain segment of the academic community): she pays attention to and considers it her duty to quote articles addressing the same topic, although very distant from the idea of her own work. Such a strategy complicates perception, leads the readers away from the main line of the text, and makes they wander through unnecessary and dead-end paths. In the worst case, it may completely obscure and dissipate the interesting and productive thought of the author. I would advise young researchers (especially those who intend to publish with us) to use only footnotes for lists of colleagues’ works addressing the same topic, without breaking the conceptual line of their text, including only those references that directly contribute to the author’s thought, in dialogue with which this thought is developed and enriched (rather than needlessly complicating the exposition of this thought, creating problems for the reader’s perception).

In the second article of the section Oksana Vorobyeva very reasonably (in my opinion) argues against the mandatory search for “prototypes” of things and phenomena in Dostoevsky’s works in the surrounding reality. She points out that the writer creates things and phenomena in accordance with his creative task, rather than slavishly and naturalistically copying from real life just because they exist there. According to her idea, the history of Raskolnikov’s article, submitted, as she shows, to a newspaper but ending up

in a journal, entails a number of significant consequences for the perception of the article and the psychological state of the character, which are not clarified by existing “real” comments.

The section *Dostoevsky in the 20th-21st Centuries* opens with an article by Irina Lvova. It shows that Dostoevsky’s books in the works of American writers turn out to be important structural elements, which, I will add a bit from myself, sometimes manage to indicate the hidden meaning of these works with their presence alone. Thus, for example, Nathanael West’s character (“Miss Lonelyhearts”) reads words about love for humanity and the world from *The Brothers Karamazov* in a bedroom where there is a Christ made of ivory, taken down from the cross and nailed to the wall with thorns (and this is a significant allusion to the story told by Lisa Khokhlakova about a four-year-old boy crucified by a Jew): the goal of the character was to make Christ wriggle in agony. However, He remains an adornment, aesthetically detached, unable to stir. We see here something opposite to what Dostoevsky constantly manages to do: to break our aesthetic detachment, show us not just Christ in agony, but also a girl with pineapple juice sit opposite Him — so that we condemn both her and the author — and only then (and not everyone) realize that we are looking in a mirror.

In the second article of the section, Vladimir Dvoeglazov traces the concept of “truth” in the works of Alexander Skaftymov on Dostoevsky. According to the researcher, in the end, “truth” in Skaftymov’s understanding (as, we note, is “truth” in Christianity) turns out to be more of a personality than an idea: a personality not distorted by greed and fear for oneself, capable of compassion and self-sacrifice (one might say differently: a personality at those moments when it is not distorted by fear and greed, imbued with compassion, and exercises self-sacrifice).

The third article in the section, by Gennady Karpenko, obviously goes beyond the scope of it: although the author’s diptych will be about Dostoevsky and Bunin, the first article could have been placed in both the *Hermeneutics. Slow Reading* section and the *Teaching Dostoevsky* section, since its subject is Raskolnikov’s words about the right to commit a crime and the “dark” nature of man, which find their foundations and affirmation in philosophy after Kant’s anthropological turn, justifying its view of the other as an object, assimilating Hegel’s “abstractionism.” The author writes: “Dostoevsky, remaining ‘with Christ’ in explaining the nature of man, does not simplify his understanding of the anthropological problem.” I would recall in support of the author’s words how Rozanov amazingly, strangely, and accurately described this: “Amazingly: in an era completely irreligious, in an era sig-

nificantly disintegrating, chaotically mixing — a series of works is created, forming as a whole something reminiscent of a religious epic, but with all the features of blasphemy and chaos of our time. All the details here — are ours; it is us, in our flesh and blood, infinite sin and distortion, who speak in his works; and, however, in all these details there is not our meaning, or at least the meaning that we did not know in ourselves. Exactly as if someone, taking our blaspheming tongues and changing nothing in them, folded them, combined thousands of their diverse sounds in such a way that in the final and general consonance we hear not blasphemy, but praise to God; and, marveling at it, rushing to it — we are drawn to it" [Rozanov, 1990, p. 69].

In the section *Teaching Dostoevsky*, we publish the first article ("Crime") of Olga Yuryeva's diptych, in which she examines the title of the novel as the key to its comprehensive analysis. The author shifts our familiar view, showing and proving that the true crime in the novel turns out to be the very emergence, the admission by Raskolnikov into his consciousness of the idea, and not the commission of an action, which is merely a consequence. I would add that such a perspective directly shows us the history of Raskolnikov's psychophysical states in the light of the stages of mastering human sin described by John Climacus: attraction, combination, cooperation, capture, struggle, and passion, being taken into account, become distinctly recognizable in the novel, changes in Raskolnikov's mental movements clearly correspond to John Climacus's descriptions, and we can observe how these stages are sequentially traversed by the character. Olga Yuryeva shows something not obvious until now: it turns out that Raskolnikov's theory divides people on the basis that some of them ("higher ones") are capable of becoming shelters and tools of ideas — and others are not. But Dostoevsky shows that the thought of even the most insignificant ("secondary," at first glance) person turns out to be capable of changing the world not because it has been seized by an idea — but because compassion has ignited in his heart, which no idea can stifle; compassion that gives rise to involvement and responsibility — and this freely accepted responsibility becomes the basis (perhaps the only one) for true human freedom. I believe that Olga Yuryeva has taken a very important step in bringing school teaching closer to Dostoevsky's true thought with this article. Because the idea as a crime is an important, pervading concept throughout his work, embodying the true core of Dostoevsky's concept of "doubleness," most directly expressed by him in *The Brothers Karamazov*, where he showed that even if a person does not release his idea outwardly, creating, as it seems to him, a securely protected "only his own" space of thought, where he is free to do anything — still there

will inevitably be someone less able to resist it, who will gladly accept it from the "teacher" and become its tool: a tool that the idea will destroy after its realization. It is impossible not to note the importance, associated with the above, of the author's reevaluation of the size of Razumikhin's personality and the role of this character in the novel.

In the section *Dostoevsky: His Readings*, Olga Sedelnikova reconstructs the history of the emergence and development of the idea of the unfinished prose cycle by Apollon Maikov, *Tales from Russian History*: essentially a textbook on Russian history for primary school (but also for anyone interested), written not analytically, but with "living pictures," contemplated by the author in dialogue with Dostoevsky. Importantly, Dostoevsky further strengthens Maikov's idea: he believes that history should be written not only as a work of art but also as a literally poetic, verse-like text, easily memorable and memorizable by heart; he wants to embed Russian history (which includes the fall of Constantinople, seeing Russia as the spiritual and dynastic heir of Byzantium) both in the heart and in the mind of the Russian people.

In the section *Reviews. Summaries*, two highly interesting and substantive reviews, written by Nikolay Podosokorsky, are published. They are dedicated to monographs on two main publishers of Dostoevsky's works: the editor of the journal *Otechestvennye Zapiski* (Eng. "Notes of the Fatherland"), Andrey Kraevsky (Svetlana Voloshina's *Power and Journalism. Nicholas I, Andrei Kraevsky, and Others*) and the editor of the journal *Russkiy Vestnik* (Eng. "The Russian Bulletin"), Mikhail Katkov (Susan Fusso's *Editing Turgenev, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy. Mikhail Katkov and the Great Russian Novel*). I would note that if in the case of the Russian researcher, the reviewer speaks about the introduction of new documents into scholarly circulation, the systematization of facts, the formation of a new image of Kraevsky, correcting the distorted traits attributed to him by authorities of the time and competitors (although he also notes inaccuracies), then the main significance of the foreign author's monograph and the meaning of its translation into Russian, obviously, is to acquaint the Russian reader with the view of Katkov formed (or forming) among American Slavists. I believe that here we are not talking about the comparative quality of Russian and Western monographs in general but about the publishing policy: after all, a scholarly publisher should represent the difference in the level of knowledge of Russian literature and history between domestic and foreign readers and apply a higher criterion of scholarly novelty to what it translates, rather than considering a book worthy of publication in Russian solely on the basis that it was published abroad — and there it made sense.

The journal is on Vkontakte and Telegram (with already 9 447 followers). You can subscribe to our pages to follow news from both the Journal and Research Centre "Dostoevsky and World Culture." Among other things, all the recordings from seminars and conferences organized by the Centre are published here. Books and articles dedicated to Dostoevsky are also available for download.

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As before, all quotations from Fyodor Dostoevsky's works, if not specified otherwise, are cited according to the Complete Works in 30 vols. (Leningrad, Nauka Publ., 1972–1990) with the references formatted according to the rules of the Russian Science Citation Index. Capital letters in the names of God, the Virgin, as in other holy names and concepts, that were lowered in this edition because of Soviet censorship are here restored in accordance with the editions published during Dostoevsky's life. The author's original emphasis in quotations (where not specified otherwise) is indicated by italics; the emphasis of the author of the article is indicated by bold font.

Our email address is fedor@dostmirkult.ru. The journal accepts articles in Russian and English. We accept submissions related to the subject of the journal from Russia and abroad. The authors will be notified about acceptance or refusal within a month.

Tatiana Kasatkina

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